

Message Text

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44

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 AGR-10 L-02

FRB-01 OMB-01 TAR-01 SP-02 SWF-01 AID-05 CIAE-00

COME-00 INR-07 IO-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01

STR-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 CEA-01 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15

/121 W

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R 162110Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6161

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY GUAYAQUIL

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

UNCLAS BOGOTA 11027

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ETDR, EAGR, CO

REF: BOGOTA 10851

1. EXPORTERS WORKING GROUP ENDED WEEK LONG MEETING DEC. 13 WITH
RECOMMENDATION "TO TAKE IMMEDIATE MEASURE LOOKING TO THE NEGOTIATION
OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO IMPROVE BANANA PRICES BASED ON THE
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REGULATION OF SUPPLIES REACHING THE IMPORTING COUNTRIES ". CHAIRMAN

OF WORKING GROUP, A COLOMBIAN BANANA GROWER, EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT WHEN EXPORTERS AND CONSUMERS MEET NEXT YEAR THEY WILL TAKE FIRST STEPS TOWARD SUCH AN AGREEMENT.

2. MEETING EVIDENTLY REACHED NO OTHER IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS, NOR SUGGESTED HOW INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT SHOULD BE ORGANIZED. ACCORDING TO UNITED BRANDS REPRESENTATIVES, WHO WERE ON COLOMBIAN DELEGATION, AFTER FIRST DAY'S OPENING SPEECHES (REFTEL) PLENARY SESSIONS WERE INFREQUENT AND UNEVENTFUL. FAO OFFICIALS (WITH WHOM EMBASSY HAD NO CONTACT REPORTEDLY TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO STIMULATE MORE ACTIVITY. ANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAT MAY HAVE OCCURRED WERE ARRANGED IN PRIVATE MEETING.

3. PREOCCUPATION OF PRESS, AND PROBABLY OF PARTICIPANTS AS WELL, WAS ECUADOR'S ROLE. UPEB PRESIDENT, FORMER COLOMBIAN MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HERNAN VALLEJO, ACCORDING TO REPORTS ACTIVELY COURTED ECUADORIANS, INCLUDING MENTIONING THAT UPEB IS REVISING ITS POLICIES IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE ECUADORIAN VIEWPOINT. HE EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT ECUADOR WILL EVENTUALLY JOIN. ECUADORIAN DELEGATE QUOTED AS OFFERING CAREFULLY WORDED COMMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT ECUADOR IS STUDYING SITUATION CAREFULLY. DURING MEETING A WIRE SERVICE REPORT FROM GUAYAQUIL QUOTED ECUADORIAN MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AS STATING CLEARLY THAT ECUADOR WOULD NOT JOIN UPEB IF THERE IS ANY POSSIBILITY OF PREJUDICIAL EFFECT ON ECUADOR.

4. ROLE OF MULTINATIONALS DID NOT RECEIVE UNDUE ATTENTION. UPEB'S VALLEJO NOTED THEIR CONTRIBUTION UP TO PRESENT IN PRODUCTION AND MARKETING. BUT HE THEN ECHOED OPENING SPEECH OF FAO'S VITON BY CITING LACK OF HARMONIZATION AMONG THEM AND THEIR FIGHT TO DOMINATE THE MARKET AS CAUSES OF "PRECARIOUS SITUATION" OF BANANAS. HE SAID RELATIONS WITH MULTINATIONALS ARE MATTER FOR EACH COUNTRY TO CONTROL ACCORDING TO NATIONAL INTERESTS, AND UPEB'S ROLE WOULD ONLY BE TO OFFER GOOD OFFICES IF ASKED.
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